

Kaufman Independent School District Special Education Parent Handbook



Emphasizing Excellence “One Step at a Time”

Kaufman ISD
Special Programs Department
1000 S. Houston
Kaufman, Texas 75142
(972) 932-2202 Fax: (972) 932-6969

Introduction

Special Education meets the unique needs of a child with a disability by using a specially designed instruction or adapting, as appropriate to the needs of the eligible child, the: content, methodology, or delivery of instruction.

A child must have a disability and have an educational need in order to be eligible for special education services.

You are your child's first and most important teacher. Every day your child is learning as you talk, play, and work together. Readiness for learning is a combination of age, individual growth, and experience. Your child will develop at his or her own rate; however, your involvement will promote readiness.

This handbook is for families and caregivers who want to help their children take "One Step at a Time" in learning and developing the skills necessary for success in school and in life.

The handbook provides valuable information that will help you prepare your child to learn and be prepared for school. By following these suggested tips and strategies, and monitoring the academic standards that your child will learn in school, you can help your child want to learn in a way no one else can. That desire is a key to your child's success in life.

Eligibility Criteria for Special Education Services

Auditory Impairment (AI): hearing is so severe with or without amplification devices which adversely affects educational performance.

Autism: (AU) a developmental disability which effects verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age three, which adversely affects educational performance.

Deaf-Blindness (DB): concomitant hearing and visual impairments, which causes severe communication and other developmental and educational delays.

Emotional Disturbance (ED): a condition exhibiting behavioral characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree to which it adversely effects a child's education.

Intellectual Disability: (ID) significantly sub average general intellectual functioning which is concurrent with deficits in adaptive behavior.

Multiple Disabilities (MD): concomitant impairments.

Noncategorical Early Childhood (NCEC): disability for children age 3 through 5 who is experiencing developmental delays.

Orthopedic Impairment (OI): severe orthopedic impairment caused by congenital anomaly or disease.

Other Health Impairment (OHI): having limited strength, vitality or alertness, due to chronic or acute health problems.

Specific Learning Disability (SLD): a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological process effecting oral expression, listening comprehension, written expression, basic reading skills, reading comprehension, math calculations, math problem solving.

Speech or Language Impairment (SI): a communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, language or voice impairment.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI): acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force to the head.

Visual Impairment (VI): an impairment in vision that even with correction effects a child's educational performance.



Processing New Learning

Research on learners indicates that there is a process that an individual goes through.

Novice Learner	Has no experience with information, skill, process, etc. Needs terminology, models, and procedures.
Advanced Beginner Learner	Has some experience and begins to collect episodic knowledge (stories) and strategic knowledge (strategies). Begins to see similarities across contexts or situations that he/she is in.
Competent Learner	Can make conscious choices about what will and will not work. Can distinguish important from unimportant. Takes personal responsibility for his/her learning because he/she knows what he/she did to make a difference.
Proficient Learner	Sees hundreds of patterns and sorts information quickly by pattern. Uses intuition and know-how to make judgments. Has wealth of experience from which to make generalizations and judgments.
Expert Learner	Makes his/her own rules because of extensive experience. Performance is so fluid it can happen virtually without conscious thought; this is called automaticity.

It takes the gifted learner 1 to 2 times of repetition to learn new information. The average learner needs 8-10 repetitions of practice. It takes much longer and is much harder for children with learning difficulties to process new information.

Be Patient with Your Child!

There are two main types of processing that are believed to be most responsible for learning. Sensory processing is how the brain uses information acquired from your senses. Cognitive processing is what the brain does after the information is received from the senses.

The left and right hemispheres of the brain are specialized and process information differently. Most people have a preferred hemisphere. This preference affects their personality, abilities, and learning style.

Sequential/organizational processing is the main filing system in the brain and is done in the left hemisphere. It involves organizing and memorizing specific bits of information including facts, figures and formulas.

Conceptual/holistic process involves looking for “the big picture”, overall patterns and underlying concepts for use in higher-order thinking, creating, and reasoning. This process occurs in the right hemisphere of the brain.

For most people, both sides of the brain work together very well. But for many SLD students, one half of the brain works much better than the other half. This causes problems learning certain kinds of information. For example, if the right side of the brain works much better (or faster) than your left, you have lots of wonderful ideas but can't get them organized well (or fast enough) for expression. If the left hemisphere works better (or faster) than your right, you are very good at memorizing and organizing details but have trouble generating new ideas or understanding concepts.



Left Hemisphere	Right Hemisphere
Speech Center	Facial Recognition
Perception of Words	Perception of Melodies
Process Language Related Sounds	Social Cues
Sequential Analysis	Reading Facial Expressions
Short-term Memory for Details	Recognition of Objects by Touch
Letters and Words	Complex Geometric Patterns
Verbal Memory	Non-language Environmental Sounds
Reading	Sense of Direction
Writing	Recognizes Place, Objects, and Faces
Math	Memory for General Themes or Ideas
Recognizes Words, Letters, and Numbers	General Knowledge
Fine-motor Coordination	Creativity/Inventiveness
Organizing your Thoughts and Materials	Reading Comprehension
Long-term Retrieval of Details	Art
Writing Mechanics	Estimation/Approximation

There are many causes to pinpoint the reason why your child has a learning disability. Move forward and help your child understand his/her disability. A true learning disability never goes away. Help your child find strategies to help him/her compensate.

Parent Tip

Help your child protect his/her brain by wearing a helmet in high-risk situations. The brain is very soft, while the skull is really hard. Inside the skull there are many sharp bony ridges. Several brain areas are especially vulnerable to trauma, especially the parts involved with memory, learning, and mood stability.





Organization

Empower your child to get organized. Help your child develop an organizing system.

- **Get the right equipment.** (A large crate for each child with a label or color code for younger kids) This can be a place to store their backpacks, folders, books, hat gloves, etc. you can check backpacks here for important papers or school newsletters.
- **Prepare the night before.** (Keep a basket in each child's room for them to choose their clothes for the next day.)
- **Put snacks or lunch food or money in a separate place** so there is no last minute searching as you pack up.
- **Post a family calendar.** (Hang it in some central location, such as the refrigerator. Let your children fill in their activities. Use stickers and a variety of colored pens to make it easy to read.
- **Keeping it up.** (Go through your child's things periodically and help them throw things out.)



Homework

Why do teachers assign homework? Teachers assign homework for many reasons. Homework can help your child:

- Review and practice what they've learned
- Get ready for the next day's class
- Learn to use resources, such as libraries, reference materials, and the internet
- Explore subjects more fully than time permits in the classroom

Homework can also help children develop good habits and attitudes. It can teach your child to work independently; and encourage self-discipline and responsibility.

Parent Tip



- Talk with your child's teachers about homework policies.
- Set a regular time for homework.
- Pick a place. (A study area should have lots of light; supplies close by, and be fairly quiet.)
- Remove distractions. (Turn off the television and discourage social telephone calls, social media, and texts during homework time.)
- When your child ask for help, provide guidance, not answers.
- Set a good example

- Show an interest.
- Talk about assignments.
- Check to see if your child has done all of the work assigned.
- Reward progress.
- Help plan long-term assignments.
- Ask questions; discuss his/her work.
- Do not assume anything; if your child does not understand, show him/her.



Parents' Roles

Parents are valued partners, and parent participation is one of the outstanding features of current legislation concerning exceptional children.

- As a parent you are entitled to an active role in the special education process.
- You have rights and responsibilities as a parent in the identification, assessment, educational planning, placement, and appeals process.

Participate

Be an active participant in all processes of your child's special education. As a parent you will find yourself one of a team of people, all working together to plan and provide the most appropriate educational program for your child. Be prepared. Ask questions about anything you do not understand. Your participation is needed in a variety of ways. Here are some examples.

- **Information**— As part of the assessment process and the IEP planning you will be asked to provide needed information concerning your child. Your cooperation will help in planning the best program for your child.
- **Review**— Your child's IEP will be reviewed once a year. Be involved in this process every year. Your input is needed. Remember the IEP is the heart of your child's education and your participation in the process is vital.
- **Attendance**— Attend all IEP meetings and parent conferences concerning your child. Also, you may have the opportunity to attend parent education program to learn more about special education activities. Contact the Special Programs Department for workshops at Region 10 Education Service Center.
- **Communication**— Good communication between home and school is an important key to the success of your child's program. Once the decisions have been reached and the IEP written, keep in close touch with what is going on at school.

What Should I know About My Child's Special Education Records? (Confidentiality)



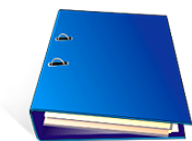
You may...

- See your child's records.
- Ask someone to help you review the records.
- Obtain copies of records.
- Ask for an explanation of anything in the records that you do not understand.
- Ask what kind of information is included in your child's file and where that file is kept.

Your child's special education records are considered confidential. Only authorized personnel have access to your child's records.

What Do I Do After the ARD (IEP) Meeting?

- Be certain to develop a plan so that you can carry out your responsibilities for your child.
- Initiate a written communication log that passes between home and school on a daily or weekly basis so that you can share information with each other. Use email if possible. This will prevent minor difficulties from becoming a major crisis.
- Mark your calendar for follow-up school meetings that were scheduled during the IEP meeting.
- Volunteer at your child's school in order to support your child's efforts, the teachers' efforts and the program. Your involvement will show your child that you value education.
- Keep a notepad by the phone to record important discussions and plans. Take a notepad to the next IEP meeting.
- Keep your copy of your child's special education records in a folder for reference.



**Your child can be successful
when both school and home work
together, Helping him/
her take One Step at a
Time!**



Useful Websites

Kaufman Independent School District
www.kaufmanisd.net

Education Service Center Region 10
www.ednet10.net

Texas Education Agency
www.tea.state.tx.us/

Legal Framework
<https://framework.esc18.net/display/Webforms/LandingPage.aspx>
[Our District County Number: 129903](#)

Learning Disabilities
<http://www.ldonline.org/>

Texas Project First
<http://www.texasprojectfirst.org/>

Partners Resource Network
<http://www.partnerstx.org/>

Contact the Special Programs Department for more information:

Kaufman I.S.D.
972-932-2202

